



**City of Sebastopol  
Building Department**  
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## **Mandatory Photovoltaic System Requirements**

As of July 21, 2013 the City of Sebastopol established a Mandatory Solar Photovoltaic Requirements Ordinance to promote the reduction of Green House Gas Emissions.

Municipal Code section 15.72 requires a photovoltaic system on all new commercial or residential buildings, and alterations, additions and remodels to existing buildings. Any addition to an existing commercial building that increases the square footage by 1800 square feet or greater and all commercial remodels, alterations or repairs that are made involving demolition, remodel or repair of more than 50% of the structure.

Any addition to an existing residential building that increases the square footage by 75% or greater and all residential remodels, alterations or repairs that are made involving demolition, remodel or repair of more than 75% of the structure.

At the time of submittal of a Building Permit application for a new commercial building or addition over 1800 square feet or alterations, remodel or repairs over 50% or more of the structure or new residential building or residential addition, alteration, remodel or repairs of 75% or more of the structure an applicant shall be required to submit plans and specifications for a solar photovoltaic system included in the submittal application. Buildings and structures of an accessory character as defined in the California Building and Residential Code as Group U occupancies and Residential Buildings 840 square feet or less are not regulated by this ordinance.

Minimum system size may be calculated by either of two methods, prescriptive or performance.

**Prescriptive Method.** The minimum system size utilizing the prescriptive method is two watts per square foot of building size. Watts are calculated by using the nameplate rating of the photovoltaic system. There are no considerations for performance such as tilt, orientation shading or tariffs.

**Performance Method.** The system sizing requirement for the performance model shall be calculated using modeling software or other methods approved by the official. The total building load is calculated in kilowatt hours. The photovoltaic system annual output is calculated by factoring in system orientation, tilt, shading, local weather conditions and equipment efficiency. On an annual basis the photovoltaic system must offset 75% of the buildings total load.

There are no additional permit or plan review fees required. Contact the Building department for further information.